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table of contents, which almost takes the place of an index ; an appendix of 21 pages, giving a list of texts and inscriptions cited ; and a further appendix of four pages, showing which of the texts and inscriptions are critically discussed.

A second volume is to give the remainder of the "General Part," and is to treat in a "Special Part" of the "tax-farmers in Sicily, in the Vipascensian mining district, in Greece and in Palestine." It is safe to predict that the volume will treat, both generally and specially, of many other things.

MUNROE SMITH.

Congressional Committees. A Study of the Origin and Development of our National and Local Legislative Methods. By LAUROS G. MCCONACHIE, PH.D. New York and Boston, T. Y. Crowell & Co., 1898. — xiv, 441 pp.

There is a strong feeling among scholars that a satisfactory constitutional history of the United States can be produced only after the state constitutions, and the various departments and institutions embraced in our national organization, have been carefully examined in detail by separate investigators. Already the foundation of such a literature has been laid. The interest awakened in the study of the plain facts connected with our political life and with our legislative methods, through the works of Woodrow Wilson and James Bryce, has borne good fruit. The products of the historical seminar are already important. Of this character are Salmon's *Appointing Power*, Kerr's *Senate* and the able monograph of Follet on *The Speaker*. Besides these and many similar academic writings, we have such contributions as Professor Hart's suggestive *Practical Essays* and Professor Goodnow's standard treatise on *Comparative Administrative Law*, with many a helpful paper in the magazines and scientific serials.

Dr. McConachie's book will likewise be welcomed by all who wish to understand the origin and real meaning of congressional government in the United States. The rise of the committee system and the growth of the power of the speaker, in its dual relation to the House and to the committees, are of primary interest to those who would know that our legislative system is the product of American conditions — of the forces that have shaped our political life. Of the nine chapters in the book, seven are devoted to the committee system of the House and two to that of the Senate.

In the opening chapter the "Origins and Antecedents" are dealt

with in an interesting way. "Most advanced of the thirteen original states were Virginia, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. Legislative chambers in the other colonies had not attained to a size and an activity which necessitated much interest in new methods." Through the town "committees of correspondence," instituted by Samuel Adams in 1772, Massachusetts gains a memorable place in the history of popular representation. But "first and, next to the Pennsylvania Assembly, the chief medium for transmission of British forms to our Federal Congress was the Virginia House of Burgesses." At its earliest session, in 1619, this body was "ludicrously, yet reverently, imitative of the mother assembly that sat beneath London spires." In Virginia, before the Revolution, the famous "intercolonial committees" had their birth.

At the time when the Federal Union began, the Virginians were making a large use of select committees, each of which was created after discussion of a subject in the committee of the whole had revealed the advisability of bringing in the bill. They had also an emerging block of standing committees appointed at the beginning of and lasting throughout the session.

In estimating the influence of English forms through Virginia on congressional procedure Jefferson's classic manual of parliamentary practice, his "legacy to the Senate upon retiring from his chair," should not be overlooked. He acknowledged his debt for information to Hatsell, clerk of the Commons from 1760 to 1797. Still, it was Pennsylvania that "furnished much the largest part of our legislative devices." In Penn's "Frame of Government" was suggested a scheme for committees which embodied the ideas of America's future. As a result, the "crude written procedure" outlined in the journal of the first Pennsylvania Assembly, 1682, as modified from time to time, formed in the Revolutionary days "a code of nineteen neatly arranged and numbered rules"; and this was handed down to the Federal Congress, "whence its influence has spread throughout the length and breadth of the land." Furthermore, it is a striking fact that a "large share in legislation belonged to the Pennsylvania speaker from the outset."

The second chapter considers "The Public and the Committees." The gradual expansion of the speaker's power, until that officer has been styled the "American Prime Minister," is dwelt upon; and the practical limitation of that power through the necessity of state representation in the committees is brought out. The author regards the growing practice of admitting private citizens, members of the

"lobby," to "committee hearings" as a healthy sign; advocates the choice of the speaker by popular vote; and sees in a certain senator's designation of the committees as "little legislatures" an indication of their future history. Congress may "resolve, say, to make each one at least of the principal committees a true miniature of itself. The children of the old assembly will in their maturity have separate homes of their own," with all the appliances and conveniences for separate work, of which a record may be kept. In this chapter, as well as in those following on "The Committees and Private Interests," "The Control by the House," "Select and Standing Committees," "Equality and Leadership" and "Bonds between Judiciary, Executive and Congress," one finds abundant evidence of careful research and of fresh and minute information gained at first hand from contact with the living actors in the great congressional drama. The chapters on the Senate are written in a similar spirit.

On the whole, Dr. McConachie has given us a valuable contribution to the study of American politics. His book is not free from faults of style. There is too much use of simile and metaphor, not always skillfully employed, which sometimes obscures the sense or in a provoking way takes the place of exact statement when precision is greatly needed. Still, even with this fault, not a very prominent one, the book is one of the very best in Professor Ely's useful series.

GEORGE ELLIOTT HOWARD.

Proceedings of the Louisville Conference for Good City Government, and of the Third Annual Meeting of the National Municipal League, held May 5, 6 and 7, 1897. Philadelphia, National Municipal League, 1897. — vi, 294 pp.

The groping of the student of city government for the true solution of American problems would be most amusing were the situation not so serious. This last volume of *Proceedings* contains hardly a paper that does not present some panacea for our ills, and many a writer affects surprise that we have not yet adopted his remedy. In nearly every case the remedy suggested "has been tried in European countries with great success."

The English council system receives considerable endorsement, especially in the paper by Mr. Frank M. Loomis, entitled "The Exclusion of Partisan Politics from Municipal Affairs." Mr. Loomis asserts that a small number of elective offices and nomination by petition are the characteristic features of the English system and of